

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 COTONO 00328 140918Z  
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PC-10 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 SY-05 OPR-02 A-01 CPR-01 /078 W  
-----140935Z 031569 /15

R 140900Z FEB 77  
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9385

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 0328

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR PINS CASC DM  
SUBJ: TREATMENT OF AMERICANS IN BENIN

REF: COTONOU 257

1. DURING FEBRUARY 7 CALL ON BENINESE PROTOCOL CHIEF PAQUI, CHARGE RAISED QUESTION OF TREATMENT OF US NATIONALS IN BENIN. CHARGE ESPECIALLY NOTED OUR CONCERN OVER THE ARREST OF AND RESTRICTIVE MEASURES IMPOSED ON PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS, WHO WERE NOW EFFECTIVELY BLOCKED FROM CARRYING OUT THE SERVICES FOR WHICH THEY WERE IN BENIN. CHARGE ALSO CITED HIS TREATMENT AT THE BENIN-NIGERIAN BORDER JANUARY 28, IN WHICH CHIEF OF BORDER POST HAD STATED THAT US CHARGE D'AFFAIRES WAS TO BE DENIED ENTRY UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE(REFTEL).

2. IN RESPONSE PAQUI REGRETTED ARRESTS AND SEEMINGLY ARBITRARY SECURITY MEASURES. HE SAID THAT GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN GREATLY APPRECIATED THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PEACE CORPS AND HAD NO DESIRE TO INTERFERE WITH ITS WORK. HE ATTRIBUTED ARRESTS AND TRAVEL LIMITATIONS TO A "MERCENARY PSYCHOSIS" WHICH HAD GRIPPED THE COUNTRY FOLLOWING JANUARY 16 ATTACK. IN PANIC ATMOSPHERE LOCAL OFFICIALS, AS WELL AS SECURITY UNITS, HAD ROUNDED UP ALL WHITES, IN MANY INSTANCES WITHOUT AUTHORITY, IN EFFORT TO LOCATE ALL POSSIBLE  
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MERCENARIES. BORDER INCIDENT, WHICH HE SAID HE WOULD INVESTIGATE, PROBABLY RESULTED FROM CHIEF OF BORDER POST ACTING WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS. NOW THAT SITUATION IS CALMER, HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO RECURRENCE OF SUCH INCIDENTS.

3. COMMENT: LATER, IN PRIVATE DISCUSSION, PAQUI SAID THAT FONMINISTRY HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY WITH "OTHER ELEMENTS OF

THE GOVERNMENT" IN MAKING THEM REALIZE SERIOUSNESS OF ARRESTS OF DIPLOMATS OR OTHER FOREIGN NATIONALS. HE MORE OR LESS ADMITTED THAT MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WAS OPERATING INDEPENDENTLY OF REST OF GOVERNMENT, AND THAT FONMINISTRY INFLUENCE WITH INTERIOR WAS LIMITED.

PAQUI ALSO OBSERVED THAT STATE OF EMERGENCY HAD CREATED HARD-SHIP FOR ALL CIVIL SERVANTS, INCLUDING HIMSELF, SINCE ALL GOVERNMENT OFFICES HAD TO BE MANNED ON A 24 HOUR BASIS.

THE FONMINISTRY HAD BEEN DIVIDED UP INTO EIGHT WATCH TEAMS WITH DUTY RUNNING FROM 0700 ONE DAY TO 0700 THE NEXT. MORALE WAS SUFFERING, AND TEMPERS WERE SHORT AS A RESULT OF LACK OF SLEEP. HE SAID THAT THIS ADDED TO THE CONFUSION CREATED BY THE "MERCENARY PSYCHOSIS." THOMPSON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CITIZEN PROTECTION, POLITICAL STABILITY, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, ARRESTS, BORDER INCIDENTS, TRAVEL CONTROLS, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL HARASSMENT  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
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**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 77 COTONOU 257  
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**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
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**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3331248  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** TREATMENT OF AMERICANS IN BENIN  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINS, CASC, DM, PC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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